



Department for Transport

Penelope Schofield
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HM Coroners Office
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[REDACTED]
HEAD OF VEHICLE ENGINEERING
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2 March 2022

Dear Ms Schofield,

Thank you for your Regulation 28 report dated 9 December, sent to the Secretary of State for Transport following the conclusion of your inquest into the death of James McKeough. I am also grateful for a copy of the full inquest documents provided subsequently. I am replying as Head of Vehicle Engineering in the International Vehicle Standards division of the Department for Transport, which leads on vehicle construction standards.

You found that the evidence considered during the inquest revealed five matters of concern relating to the configuration of the amber flashing lamps mounted to the rear of the impacted trailer. Specifically, you concluded that the position, size, colour, and brightness of the lamps may have concealed or overwhelmed the active direction indicator and been a contributing factor in this collision.

In Great Britain, vehicle lighting is regulated through the Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989 (as amended) (RVLR). In general, the RVLR require that lamps fitted to vehicles show a steady light - exemptions to this requirement exist for direction indicators and warning beacons. The RVLR requires vehicles having a maximum speed not exceeding 25mph or any

trailer drawn by it to be fitted with an amber warning beacon if it is to be driven on an unrestricted dual-carriageway. A warning beacon is defined in regulations as a lamp that is capable of emitting a flashing or rotating beam of light throughout 360° in the horizontal plane.

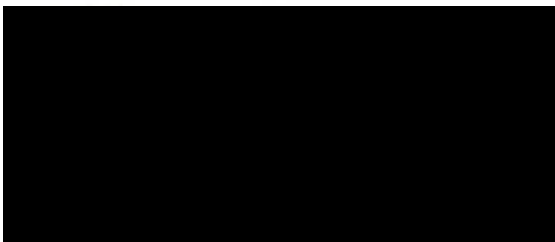
Having considered the inquest documents provided, it appears that the two rear flashing amber lamps fitted to the trailer and implicated by the police in the outcome of this collision do not comply with the definition of a warning beacon as they are unidirectional and not capable of emitting a beam of light throughout 360° in the horizontal plane.

Based on the evidence supplied, we consider that had a compliant warning beacon been fitted appropriately to the trailer in compliance with RVLR it may have enabled Mr McKeough to differentiate the warning signal from an active direction indicator.

However, the evidence does suggest a lack of understanding of the requirements of the RVLR and I will be writing to the National Police Chiefs' Council, Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency, Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, Agricultural Engineers Association and National Farmers' Union of England and Wales and the National Farmers Union of Scotland to provide guidance and raise awareness of the specific requirements for amber warning beacons fitted to agricultural vehicles used on the road.

I hope you find this information helpful and are assured that the Department is taking appropriate action to respond to your concerns.

Yours faithfully,



Head of Vehicle Engineering
International Vehicle Standards